

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 2568

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, RP
SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: DETAINEE-CANDIDATES
NOT TO BE RELEASED

REF: MANILA 2402

1. THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (NSC) HAS DECIDED THAT WHILE DETAINEES MAY RUN FOR SEATS IN THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA, THEY MAY NOT BE RELEASED MERELY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CAMPAIGN. PRESIDENT MARCOS CONVENED THE NSC ON FEBRUARY 14 AFTER SEVERAL DETAINEES, INCLUDING BENIGNO AQUINO, JOSE MARIA SISON, BERNABE BUSCAINO, AND VICTOR CORPUS, REPORTEDLY REQUESTED RELEASE FROM DETENTION EITHER TO RUN FOR SEATS IN THE INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA OR TO CAMPAIGN FOR OTHER CANDIDATES. THE DETAINEES CONTENDED THAT P.D. 1290 ALLOWS PERSONS WHOSE CASES HAVE NOT BEEN DECIDED TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHTS OF SUFFRAGE. THE NSC RULED THAT DETAINEES MAY FILE CERTIFICATES OF CANDIDACY THROUGH THEIR LAWYERS, BUT THAT THEY /SHALL NOT BE ENTITLED TO PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY REASON OF HAVING FILED SUCH CANDIDACY." COMMENT. NSC DECISION CLEARS THE WAY FOR BENIGNO AQUINO TO LEAD OPPOSITION SLATE IN METRO MANILA. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO ENSURE THAT HIS CAMPAIGN WILL BE WAGED BY PROXY, MOST LIKELY WITH AQUINO'S WIFE OR MOTHER READING STATEMENTS PREPARED BY NINOY IN HIS
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DETENTION CELL. RADIO TAPES BY THE CANDIDATES EVIDENTLY WILL BE PERMITTED ALSO. (SEE SEPTTEL). IN PUBLICIZING ITS DECISION, THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWED THE NOT-SO-SUBTEL TECHNIQUE OF LUMPING AQUINO CASE WITH THOSE OF CONFIRMED RADICAL LEFTISTS. FEBRUARY 15 BULLETIN TODAY, FOR EXAMPLE, REPORTED THAT THE BID OF 14 DETAINEES "HEADED BY BENIGNO AQUINO JR., AND JOSE MARIA SISON" FOR TEMPORARY RELEASE

HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN. WHILE WE HAVE NO HARD INFORMATION, WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT SUCH DETAINEES AS SISON HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY INTENDING TO ENTER ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND WERE SEEKING RELEASE FOR THAT PURPOSE. THUS IT APPEARS THAT GROUP OF 14 PETITIONERS WAS AT LEAST IN PART CONCOCTED BY GOP TO PROVIDE SUITABLE FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TO DENY AQUINO PETITION FOR RELEASE. (PRESS INFERENCES TO THE CONTRARY, WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT AQUINO HAS MADE SPECIFIC REQUEST TO BE RELEASED TO CAMPAIGN,) END COMMENT

2. THE NSC ALSO DECIDED NOT TO PERMIT THE TWO COMMUNIST FACTIONS, THE PRO-MOSCOW PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS AND THE PRO-PEKING COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES/MARXIST-LENINIST, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS. INFORMATION SECRETARY TATAD TOLD NEWSMEN THAT THE NSC BASED ITS DECISION ON MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT THAT THE TWO PARTIES HAVE NOT ENTIRELY ABANDONED THEIR OBJECTIVE OF OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT. NEWSOM

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